



## Announcements

**ASERF** has instituted **Dr Stya Paul Young** Educationist Award' for honouring Young Educationists who have demonstrated their potential by making an impact on Indian education. Applications from the eligible scholars are invited for the Award of the year 2013. [Click here](#) to download the prescribed format along with the terms and conditions.

### **Apeejay Stya University announces admission for the session 2013-14**

Apeejay Stya University is offering diverse catalogue of technical, scientific, management and liberal arts courses for the Fall Admission 2013-14. Applicants for admission accepted on the basis of comprehensive merit, judged by their academic excellence, their extracurricular achievements, and their utilization of the resources they have had available. As part of the application, the University recognize a number of examination scores to establish academic excellence, including AIEEE, GMAT, SAT, SAT-II. **For more,** [click here](#)

### **Apeejay Stya University announces Founder's Scholarship**

On the Death anniversary of our beloved founder Dr. Stya Paul, Apeejay Stya University (ASU), Haryana announces a Merit - Based Scholarship Scheme for *Undergraduate, Post Graduate and MBA Courses*

Please visit our website for more: [click here](#)

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## Partnership

Dear Partners,

The Apeejay Stya Education Research Foundation (ASERF) invites news, articles, resource material, opinions and analyses on relevant educational issues that can be highlighted in our by-monthly e-bulletins and on the ASERF portal.

We request if you could spare a few moments of your valuable time to have a look at our website and guide us on our regular initiatives.

## Editor

[Dr. Mithilesh Kumar Singh](#)

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**ASPECT**

**EDUCATION AND EQUALITY**

*India is marketing education primarily as a consumer product*

Ananya Vajpeyi's article addresses the alarming growth of inequality in Indian higher education. Her balancing account of the American scene might help by tempering our ill-informed idealizing of education in the United States of America while ignoring the real strengths that ensure its global dominance. But we can benefit from the US example only after absorbing the realities of our own.

The inequalities of our education system are all too glaring. The literacy rate is 74 per cent. School enrolment figures have actually dropped in the last five years. The Constitution aimed at free and universal schooling till age 14 by 1960. But our privileged classes jealously guarded their prize asset of education, diverting to their own benefit most of the funds and virtually all the attention given to the field. Today most Indian children are notionally enrolled in schools: with luck, they might acquire the rudiments of the three Rs. The gulf between them and the educationally empowered remains almost as impassable as that separating them from the totally illiterate.

Even more important than numbers is the question of aims and priorities. There has been a sinister revolution in our school system since Independence. The school network during the *raj* was woefully inadequate; but such as it was, it consisted chiefly of vernacular schools which provided a sound if conservative basis for higher studies and other activities. They bred the generation that led us to Independence, and provided human resources for a restrictive but, within its limits, efficient order of higher education. Till the 1960s, India's most distinguished scholars, scientists and statesmen virtually all went to vernacular schools, often in remote villages.

The pre-eminence of this general school system has been subverted through politicized mismanagement, inadequate funds and public indifference. For decades now, everyone who could scrape together the money — sometimes barely so — has enrolled their own children in fee-paying schools of urbanized bent. Since economic liberalization, the situation has been compounded by a new category of super-plush schools requiring a parental income in high six figures a month. Children emerging from these schools would be lost outside one of two environments: the affluent

West, or high-end professional enclaves in Indian metro cities.

This schoolscape blends perfectly with current priorities in economic planning and class interest. It is one thing to say that people who can pay for their children's education should do so; another to apply this principle to turn the nation's school system a-kilter. The principle itself is unexceptionable, and needs to be firmly upheld in the public interest. Untold harm is done by the slogan-mongering defence of totally free schools for all, and colleges with derisory fee structures laid down in the 19th century. Such blind opposition has actually helped to commercialize education. All parents who could possibly do so have withdrawn their children from the under-resourced state system to fee-paying schools with better infrastructure and more attention to their immediate career needs.

Such schools have acquired a stranglehold over the affluent and articulate classes. With this pressure group out of the way, the State school system has not received its due from the huge Central funds derived from the education cess. The government of India is sitting on a cash mountain that could deliver quality education to every Indian child. The Right to Education Act should have catalyzed such action, but the nation seems unaware that it exists. Predictably, the deadline for its implementation has been extended. We are replaying the dismal history of the constitutional promise of free universal education.

Let us leave wider social factors out of account. Simply on the economic front, the privileged schools might feed certain high-value sectors of the economy; but its contribution to the economy as a whole, or to domestic higher education, will be disproportionately low. Students from the new super-sector independent schools feature sparsely in the entry lists of leading Indian colleges and universities: either they do not apply, or they do not make the grade. But the more traditional (and somewhat less expensive) 'old' independent schools are gaining ever-greater monopoly over the upper end of tertiary education. Students without this advantage try, and some succeed, to level the field by private coaching, but that too needs money. Needless to say, a handful of gravely deprived students reach the top in spite of all obstacles. But at least half discontinue their studies, especially in costly disciplines like engineering or medicine. They do not showcase the success of the system; they demonstrate its failure.

Meanwhile across India, thousands of engineering seats go a-begging. This is yet to happen with medical education, but there a good proportion of



seats are, heaven help us, effectively for sale to aspirants of lower merit. The paucity of entry-level talent in the basic sciences is a general concern. I am not even talking about the humanities. In other words, the real dearth is not of places, but of meritorious students to fill those places. Yet even now, the government's gut response is to increase the intake in technology and other professional fields to meet the supposed future demand from industry and the service sector. Most of the additional places will be in private institutions. Such institutions certainly constitute a growth industry of their own. Whether they spawn any other is an open question.

Given the present state of school education, consider what this means for human resource creation. The children of the masses will largely be barred from the new institutions, partly through poverty and partly through genuine educational shortcomings (the second commonly induced by the first). The extra places will be filled by less and less competent students from the fee-paying classes. In other words, there will be no effective resource creation: the planned expansion will simply dilute standards. A 2009 survey found only 30 per cent of India's graduates fit to work in the global economy. That proportion will plummet further.

In so far as this default policy has a rationale, it is that of capitalist enterprise. Yet it violates the principles of all capital management, including the human. The obvious and only way to increase the supply of trained manpower is to expand the effective resource base of higher education by better schooling for all children, putting the nation's vast wasted talent to proper use. When a mining company finds its old veins exhausted, it does not go on tapping them for diminishing returns; it seeks new fields. But then again, if it finds the problem is obsolete machinery, it does not write off the plant: it updates the technology. We need to improve our extant network of institutions to cater to the talent entrusted to them. To put it mildly, the first step is being toyed with, and the second scarcely conceived of — rather, Union policy is almost designedly downgrading the system in place. I will discuss this issue in my next article.

I hesitate to borrow the phrasing of knee-jerk campaigners, but the Indian Union is marketing education primarily as a consumer product for individual enjoyment. This aim has been defended in so many words by an eminent Delhi economist, and implicitly by a large tribe. We who are not reform-school economists may wonder at the

notion that public education is not a public good, that it does not contribute to national productivity by enhancing human resources, to say nothing of improved public order and social organization, or — perish the thought — natural justice or quality of life.

We have borrowed the term 'human resources' from management science, but drawn little else from that sphere. In the process, we have lost sight of the broader compulsions of educational planning and execution. The outcome, as I will argue in my next, has been a very expensive journey to little gainful end.

**Source:** 17 June, 2013/ [Telegraph India](#)

### NEWS

#### Times Group enters education biz with Times Pro

One of India Inc's big headaches is the acute shortage of skilled or trained professionals. The 2013 employability survey by Assocham (Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India) finds that only 10% of Indian graduates are employable.

In an attempt to plug this critical gap, the Times Group has decided to enter the education business. Its initiative, Times Pro, will be launched on Monday under the aegis of the Times Centre for Learning. It will aim to meet the needs of industry by improving the skill sets of graduates and transforming them into professionals through specific courses in BFSI (Banking and Financial Industry), Media, Organized Retail, Hospitality and Healthcare.

TimesPro courses will be designed and delivered by industry experts and academics with extensive experience. TimesPro will leverage the group's extensive resources, knowledge base and technological expertise to provide a first-of-its kind learning experience. As part of the launch, the company has set up modern learning centres in Mumbai, Noida, Jaipur, Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Bhubaneswar.

Speaking on the eve of the launch, Vineet Jain, managing director, Times Group, said, "The Times of India Group has innovation and excellence in its DNA. TimesPro through its unique and modern training programmes will provide industry with graduates having relevant professional skill sets. These courses will also make graduates more employable and job-ready."

TimesPro's flagship program - a post-graduate Diploma in Banking Management - will be launched later this month. It will churn out young professionals to meet the huge demand in the

banking industry created by the influx of private banks in the next few years due to the amendments made by the Reserve Bank of India.

**Source:** 17 June, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

### India's first technical university for women in Delhi

To cater to women desiring higher education in technology and research, the country's first ever technical university for women was inaugurated here on Thursday.

The Indira Gandhi Delhi Technological University (IGDTU) has been upgraded from the erstwhile Indira Gandhi Institute of Technology which was set up in 1998.

It is offering four B.Tech courses and five M.Tech programmes that include masters in computer application.

"The university will impart quality education to women so that well-qualified female engineers become part of the workforce to meet growing demands of the industry," said Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit after unveiling the website and the admission brochures of the University at its Kashmere Gate-based campus in north Delhi.

According to GDTU Vice Chancellor Nupur Prakash, the university has made contributions in the fields of higher studies, research and innovation and the up gradation will give a thrust to women's education.

"The university aims at fostering an environment for excellence in education, to provide women with knowledge to gain equitable status and enable them to become torch-bearers and successful entrepreneurs in the times ahead," she said.

**Source:** 18 June, 2013/ [Zee News](#)

### India to provide Rs 40 million to Nepal for new school building

India on Wednesday pledged to provide a grant of Rs 41 million to Nepal for the construction of a new school building and help in creating better facilities for over 1,000 students.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between the embassy of India, district development committee, Kapilvastu and Shree Higher Secondary School situated in Kapilvastu district for providing the grant assistance to construct three storied school building under Nepal-India Economic Cooperation Programme.

The existing infrastructure of the school established in 1979 is dilapidated and inadequate to meet the growing requirements of the students.

The new building, being constructed with Indian grant assistance, will help in creating better facilities for over 1,000 students, about half of whom are girls, says a press release issued by the Embassy of India.

The project would create an improved environment for learning and contribute to the development of education in the district.

In addition to this project, work for three other projects is on at a cost of Rs 95.60 million in Kapilvastu District.

India has also provided four ambulances and one school bus for the district.

**Source:** 19 June, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

### PPP mooted to meet rising demand for higher education

Ever increasing demand for higher education with sub-standard quality and narrowing fiscal allocation is the biggest rationale for attracting private finance in higher education in UP. This is what the nine-member committee constituted by the state government on November 6, 2012 to formulate a policy to encourage the public-private partnership (PPP) for higher education has written in its first draft.

Speaking to TOI, committee chairman Mohammad Muzammil, presently the vice-chancellor of MJP Rohilkhand University, Bareilly said, and "High pass percentage in Intermediate exams has given rise to the demand for higher education. Financial constraints and concern for quality can be dealt through private investment. For education to grow, we need to chalk out a flexible, realistic, practical and compatible route." Muzammil informed that the committee has sought suggestions, comments and inputs from the people till July 15 after which a final draft will be prepared. The report will be submitted to the state government for implementation thereafter.

Sources said the committee was still considering feasibility of four models of PPP (public private partnership). The first is the infrastructural model where the government provides the land and operation is carried out by a private firm. Second is the outsourcing model which is based on 'build, operate and transfer' model sponsored by a business organisation. Next is the reverse outsourcing model where the state government is the financial supporter while a business outfit takes

care of the maintenance. Fourth is the hybrid model in which there is participation of state government and a private firm in terms of finances as well as maintenance (usually 50/50 partnership).

In the first draft, the committee has highlighted various needs for the privatisation of higher education. The members have talked about how, over the years, there has been a decline in the ratio of expenditure on education. The state government's expenditure on education (all levels) has gone up from 2.48% of the total expenditure in 1980-81 to 3.78% in 2000-01. This ratio stood at 3.34% in 2006-07. It came down to below 3% in 2003-05.

"What is very remarkable and rather disappointing from the view point of the social sector goals, is that since 1990-91, the share of education in the total state budget has come down from about 22% to 16% in 2008-09. And the share of higher education has come down to about 5% of the total allocation to education which in 2013-14 went up to 7.5%," reads the draft.

Besides, the composition of plan expenditure on higher education in UP in the 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (2002-07) was 10.09% which declined to 5.32% in the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (2007-12). "Financial constraints, and quality concerns have given rise to the suggestion of PPP in higher education," said a member of the committee.

According to the draft, the new financing strategy should take note of the challenges posed by existing education system where the public and private institutions have come to coexist in both competitive and complementary manner. "The private sector has picked up where the government has failed to deliver. In turn, the government is forced to improve its services," said Muzammil. Another point mentioned by the committee is that to attract private investment there needs to be a single-window system to process the opening of new colleges. Apart from this, the 'hidden charges', which completely privatised colleges charge from students in order to pay salary to the teachers is a major concern in the present system of education. "PPP is expected to sort this out," said a member.

However, the recommendations have received opposition from a section of teachers. Former president, LU Associated College Teachers' Association (LUACTA), Moulindu Mishra said, "Privatising the education will lead to rise in commercial activities which is against the idea of education. Students are our assets and should be nurtured to realise their potential."

**Source:** 20 June, 2013/ [Times of India](http://timesofindia.com)

### **Rutgers University to set up ICCR Chair on Indian Studies**

Rutgers University in New Jersey will set up the ICCR Chair of Contemporary Indian Studies under the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh-President Barack Obama Knowledge Initiative.

Indian Consul-General for New York Dnyaneshwar M. Mulay and Interim Chancellor of Rutgers University Dr Richard L. Edwards signed and exchanged the MoU to initiate the academic partnership.

The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Chair and the visiting Professor from India will teach courses, deliver public lectures and engage directly with staff and students at Rutgers.

"The partnerships offer an exciting opportunity to unify many of the University's efforts with Indian institutions and raise our visibility," said Dr Edwards.

"Our participation as a recipient of the Obama-Singh 21st Century Knowledge Initiative Award is just one of several exciting developments that allow us to build stronger ties between the two nations," he said.

"As one of the University's five focus countries for strategic international engagement, strengthening relationship with India will help us to promote collaborative research and global citizenship throughout the Rutgers University.

"This is an important moment in Rutgers' relationship with India and will deepen academic relationships between Rutgers and institutes of higher learning in India," Edwards said.

Rutgers, part of the State University system, was founded in 1766 as one of the nine colonial colleges before the American Revolution.

Dr Edwards said at an impressive function held at the Consulate General of India in Manhattan, as one of the five focus countries India has come to be the priority for international engagement efforts to promote global research and teaching among faculty, students and staff.

There are over 900 Indian students with over 25 student organisations focused on or related to Indian culture.

New Jersey is the home to a large Indian population representing 11.1 per cent of the university's foreign born residents.

Rutgers faculty are now engaged in conducting research from Indian literature to public sector

management and nutrition and are working collaboratively with many Indian scholars, he said.

Rutgers University has strong academic collaborations with Indian Institute of Technology in New Delhi and Mumbai; Shreemathi Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University in Mumbai, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) in Delhi, University of Hyderabad and Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai.

The university was one of five out of more than 100 applicant institutions to receive a grant of \$250,000 under the knowledge initiative.

The initiative was announced in 2009 by Obama and Manmohan to encourage mutual understanding, facilitate educational reforms, foster economic development and engage civil society through academic cooperation with Indian institutions of higher education.

**Source:** 20 June, 2013/ [The Hindu Business Line](#)

### India, US sign four pacts on education

India is taking steps to fill the gaps in conventional education and is looking at starting at least 200 community colleges in the country.

Minister for Human Resource Development M.M. Pallam Raju said that given the size of the student community in the country there was a scope for establishing at least 20,000 community colleges.

On Tuesday, four Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed in the educational space during the ongoing India-US Higher Education Dialogue 2013.

He said that there was substantial progress and clarity on how to progress on community colleges. The Ministry is working with the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), to develop a framework for community colleges in the country.

An MoU was signed between the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the AACC for setting up community colleges in India.

Further, Raju also said that with the transformation that Massively Open Online Courses (MooCs) are bringing in the educational sphere, the Government is planning to focus on this area.

An MoU for this has been signed between IIT Bombay and edX, a non-profit entity created by Harvard and MIT that develops higher education content for open online courses.

Besides this there is an effort to enhance teacher capacity development in collaboration with institutes in the US.

Raju said that through these initiatives the Government was trying to adopt best practices of teaching and not trying to mirror models in the West.

When asked if the recent move to introduce four-year courses in University of Delhi could be seen as replicating a Western model and whether it would work in India, Raju said the Government was keeping a close watch on the concerns and any lacunae in the course would be sorted out. While addressing concerns that the talks and MoUs signed on Tuesday could be a way of giving foreign institutions a back-door entry, given that the Foreign Education Providers (Regulation) Bill is yet to come to pass, Raju said these are straightforward agreements to encourage both American and Indian students to go to each others' countries for studies.

He said the Bill, which is pending in Parliament, would be tabled in the upcoming session.

**Source:** 25 June, 2013/ [The Hindu Business Line](#)

### Higher education: UGC for increasing fellowships, reservations

Concerned over the "gaps" in the higher education system, the University Grants Commission (UGC) will undertake a slew of measures to bridge them including increased number of fellowships, reservations and financial assistance to girls.

Announcing this, UGC chairman Ved Prakash also pointed out that another "key concern" was the low enrolment in teacher education which stood merely at three per cent.

The commission will also make corrections in its programmes and schemes that were being implemented for the purpose of ensuring equity "equal participation of different social groups, gender, minorities, Prakash, who along with HRD minister M M Pallam Raju, released brochures which identified the gaps, said.

Noting that there were abysmally poor participation of girls in some disciplines, Prakash said, "We are concentrating on this so that more number of girls participate...We will take measures such as financial assistance, increase the number of fellowships, open certain disciplines in certain parts of country, and then incentivise the public institutions for those programmes or even make reservations."

He also stressed on the need to have more number of trained teachers to strengthen the school

education and asserted that unless the school education was strengthened, the quality of higher education cannot be improved.

"We need to identify the states where the teacher training institutes are less than the national average."

Raju said that as higher education grows in capacity, one of the important components was to make sure that it is accessible to everybody. "And also that there is equity that is ensured in our higher education effort to encourage participation of the SCs, STs, OBCs, the minorities and the persons with disabilities," he said.

In the last few years, Raju said, the UGC has supported nearly 18.94 lakh students from as many as 6,562 institutions involving an expenditure of Rs 4,684 crore.

**Source:** 26 June, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

### **Aligarh Muslim University signs pact with Ohio State University**

The Ohio State University proposes to launch a pilot project in partnership with AMU to meet the growing need for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) faculty in India.

US secretary of state John F Kerry signed eight MoUs with minister of human resource development MM Pallam Raju to step up collaboration and build partnership between American and Indian institutions of higher education

One of these involves the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). Each of these projects will receive an award of about \$250,000.

The AMU programme will be implemented by both institutions to build a STEM-Education and Research Centre at AMU that would be aimed at providing opportunity for education and research in areas of mutual expertise and benefit.

**Source:** 27 June, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

### **To get into schools, teachers will have to take entrance test**

Aspiring schoolteachers will have to clear a compulsory common entrance test (CET) before they can be recruited in public or private schools.

On Wednesday, deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar, along with state minister for school education Fauzia Khan, gave an in-principle approval to the proposal, which will be subsequently forwarded to the state cabinet for the final nod.

The Maharashtra government has given its in-principle approval to a proposal of making it mandatory for all aspiring schoolteachers to clear a Common Entrance Test (CET) before they can be recruited in public or private schools.

The new system will be an addition to the existing teacher eligibility test (TET), which aspiring teachers already have to sit for, under the provisions of the Right to Education (RTE) Act. A detailed proposal will be forwarded to state cabinet for approval after deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar cleared the plans along with state minister for school education Fauzia Khan on Wednesday.

"The CET will be in addition to TET and it will ensure that we select the best candidates. With the extra test, we want to make sure that only the best qualified teachers enter classrooms," said additional chief secretary J S Saharia. Several candidates felt they were denied a fair chance of becoming a teacher, said Pawar, adding that the CET would hopefully make the selection process more competitive as well as transparent. "There should not be any injustice with any of the candidates and therefore, it was important to take the decision," Pawar said.

Currently, to sit for the eligibility test before being appointed in a school, a candidate needs to hold either a diploma in education (DED) or a bachelor's degree in education (BEd).

"But there have been several complaints of money exchanging hands to obtain any of those diplomas or degrees. So to weed out unqualified teachers, to stop malpractice in the short-listing procedure and to foolproof the selection of only good candidates, we introduced the extra round of exam," said an official.

Senior government officials said the CET has been necessitated as there have been complaints of malpractice in the existing arrangement for selecting and short listing teachers.

The TET has already been implemented in many states under the RTE guidelines and Maharashtra too has initiated the process. The CET will come into effect after a cabinet approval.

The criteria for CET, however, have not yet been laid down.

Apart from these tests, the government has already put in place several safeguard for minimum academic and professional qualifications for aspiring teachers.

**Source:** 27 June, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

### Russian universities eye Indian students for medical seats

The Russian government has announced unique opportunity for Indian students to seek admission to the MBBS and post-graduate medical courses at universities in Russia.

Some of these universities include People's Friendship University of Russia, Moscow; I M Sechenov Moscow Medical Academy, St. Petersburg; I P Pavlov State Medical University; Tambov State Medical University; Nizhny Novgorod State Medical University and Ryazan State Medical State Academy, among others.

Thousands of students from all over India successfully graduate from premier universities in Russia each year and over the last 15-20 years in particular, the number of international students coming to the Russian federation has risen.

For ensuring safety and transparency, the Consulate General of the Russian Federation in India has recognized EDURUSSIA as the authorized ad-mission department of the Russian state and government universities in India. Apart from being the authorized information and admission centre, EDURUSSIA also functions as the office of the international students department of Russian government universities in India.

Manoj Patki of EDURUSSIA said, "Admissions are conducted as per medical council of India (MCI) New Delhi rules and regulations and the applicants should have more than 50% in Physics, Chemistry and Biology in 10+2 from any state or central board of education in India while the requirement for the reserved category student is 40%."

Courses are conducted in English medium. The Russian language is also taught as a subject in order to enable students to interact with local patients during their extensive clinicals and practicals.

Russian degrees universities are appended with an 'European Appendix' as Russian curriculum is equated with medical and engineering curriculums across the European Union which allows our Indian graduates from Russia to apply for jobs and postgraduate courses in universities all over Europe in countries like Germany, he said.

These options are not available to MBBS graduates from India as the Indian MBBS degree does not qualify them to appear for the licensing exams of other countries like Germany, he said.

**Source:** 29 June, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

### Over 60,000 engineering seats vacant in Maharashtra

Over 60,000 seats in engineering faculties across colleges in Maharashtra will remain vacant in this academic year.

As per the latest estimates of Directorate of Technical Education (DTE), of the 1.55 lakh available seats, about 93,000 students have secured admission in the first round. This means about 62,000 will remain vacant till second round "the filing of forms for which will commence on July 2.

Officials said that about 2,000 more students would be accommodated in round two while 2,000 students will opt for IIT, NITs and renowned colleges from other states.

The number of vacant seats is 20,000 more as compared to last year, while only two new engineering colleges have been added this year, taking the tally to 366 colleges.

DTE officials said that Nagpur region would be worst hit with over 10,000-12,000 seats expected to remain vacant.

"Only 15,000 forms have been received for admissions to about 25,000 engineering seats in 58 colleges under Nagpur University," an official added.

Even technical education director Subhash Mahajan admitted that a large number of seats will remain vacant this year as well. He stated that number of vacant seats will be around 40,000 and not 60,000, as it appears after the end of the first round of admissions.

"The numbers will be same like last year, as about 7,500 seats are cancelled this year after many colleges made a request to this effect," he told TOI from Mumbai.

Mahajan stated that there was no immediate solution in sight and it was up to the AICTE to reform its policies and not to grant permission to new colleges.

"We also have drafted our own perspective plan and will be permitting new colleges accordingly. Many colleges that were not getting students were coming forward to closing down the branches. Many of them closed their entire operations for the same reason as they can't afford to run with minimal students," he said.

Joint director of technical education for Nagpur region Gulab Thakre refused to take calls for his views.

**Source:** 30 June, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

**Engineering education in distance mode a disaster**

The student enrolment in the conventional education system has increased to about 1.36 crore in over 650 universities and 35,000 colleges in India. At the same time, open and distance learning (ODL) has been evolving in parallel with the arrival of newer technologies.

Currently our ODL system consisting of IGNOU, state open universities and education programmes offered by other universities has 36 lakh learners. When it comes to technical and professional courses, the enrolment in the ODL system is less than 10%. Of late, a contentious issue has arisen regarding offering technical degree programmes through distance mode.

Before considering this demand, let's look at the scenario of distance education in general. With tremendous pressure for expansion of higher education, there is an emerging need to bank upon an alternative system to achieve higher enrolment ratio. Understandably, ODL is promoted as an effective tool for expansion and also to impact education, especially for disadvantaged groups, to the neo-literates, and to the rising aspirants for higher education. This would require effective transformation of ODL system to be evolved as a reliable means of education and training.

However, a majority of the ODL system, with some exceptions, is in a shambles. Most rely on sending few lessons in printed form. Students are expected to digest them and submit assignments by mail and give examinations. Very few programmes have migrated to latest course delivery methods like the Internet, streaming video, virtual labs, instructional design, interactive content, on-the-job training, etc., to create a learning experience. There is also no system of assessment and accreditation of ODL programmes.

Some ODL institutions have become 'degree mills' offering sub-standard education, eroding the credibility of the qualifications awarded. This at a time when there is considerable pressure on individuals to earn degrees mainly for career growth, tempting some to take the easy route through the degree mills. A few unscrupulous open universities, deemed universities and some fake universities even offered PhD degree by distance mode. Several thousand gullible students were registered in them prior to the UGC banning it.

Under such a climate of poor standards of learning, induction of engineering degree programmes will

be a disaster. Technical education programmes through ODL was initiated in late 1970s and early '80s by a few deemed and technical universities. Soon, more institutions joined the bandwagon. In July 2009, the government banned offering of BE/BTech degrees through distance education. Some universities continue to defy it.

Despite the large-scale expansion of technical education during the past decade, there are still takers for ODL engineering degree due to ignorance of its worthlessness. Most employers do not recognise such degrees. Yet another danger is that of ill-equipped ODL engineering graduates occupying expanding job market for teaching positions in colleges, further eroding the quality of engineering education.

Hence, it is necessary to provide clear guidelines like permitting only those programmes which do not involve extensive practical and field work through the distance mode and mandating approval by a statutory regulatory body. A system of accreditation should be evolved to determine their quality. A great deal of research into learning methods and pedagogy through distance mode is also needed.

There is a significant section of the society which is seriously interested in acquiring technical education qualifications for upgrading competence, accessing knowledge of new developments in their profession and seeking new career options. Technical education in distance mode can more appropriately cater to this demand.

However to achieve this objective certain minimum enabling conditions have to be fulfilled by way of curricular content, seamless delivery methods, learning facilities, exposure to professional practices and above all rigorous quality control.

**Source:** 16 June 2013/ [New Indian Express](#)

**India lacks in research-based education, Yale professor says**

The absence of research-based education in the country has put Indian education way behind other universities across the world, senior associate dean of Yale School of Management, USA, Anjani Jain told TOI on Sunday during an exclusive chat.

A resident of Arera Colony, Bhopal, and a science graduate of Indore university, Jain was on a short visit to the city. Jain joined the faculty of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in 1986 and served for 26 years before joining Yale SOM, New Haven, in July last year.

He did his MBA from the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmadabad and a PhD in

operations research from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Jain said the research-based education is need of the hour. "The missing part in the Indian educational system is the institutional culture does not promote research-based scholarships as other top universities do to motivate scholars. There is no shortage of talented faculty and students in the country," he said.

Citing the example of universities in USA, he said, "The US was also not much known in the field of education in early 20th century. But they concentrated on the research work in 1930-40. The result is there for all to see. That country now has some of the leading universities of the world."

However, he added that the situation is changing gradually in India.

"Institutes like Indian Institute of Science (IISC) Bangalore, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) and few others have come up promoting research based education. It is a good sign," said Jain.

A winner of numerous teaching awards, Jain has taught courses at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya, Israel, the Indian School of Business (ISB) in Hyderabad and Mohali. He has served on the International Advisory Council of the ISB and as its co-area leader in operations management.

Suggesting regular update in syllabi and regular training of the teachers, he said, "A good teacher in the absence of training and research work turns into bad teacher in the long run.

Being at the forefront of the knowledge, they should remain engaged in continuous research work. Their research work would help update the syllabi also."

As for state of engineering studies, he said, "It is surprising that Bhopal has almost 100 engineering colleges when the supply is not up to that level. It simply suggests that institutes are good at publishing catchy brochure, but the substance inside is not that good."

Students should be regularly trained in their learning years to meet the demand from industry, he added.

**Source:** 17 June, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

### **Universities in India need a dose of competition and autonomy**

In yet another confirmation of the poor standard of higher education in India, a list of the top 100

varsities under 50 years of age does not feature a single Indian university. The Times Higher Education 100 under-50 global ranking is designed to gauge relatively younger universities - established in 1963 or after - and juxtapose their performance with that of older institutes of learning. Although eight countries in Asia make the list, India's absence highlights its inadequacy in terms of a crucial human resource input. This certainly does not augur well for a developing nation looking to reap demographic dividends.

Given its sizeable youth population - around 360 million between the ages of 10 and 24 - India has few universities and even fewer quality institutes of learning. Sans a culture of research, varsities have been reduced to mere factories for producing degree holders. The situation is further compounded by the lack of infrastructure, which in turn explains the failure to attract the best academic talent. Meanwhile, administration of higher education has been converted into a means for disbursing political patronage. With babus only interested in feathering their nests, pedagogy has suffered. Add to this the politics of reservations and it is easy to see why meritocracy has taken a backseat in our varsities.

Unless rectified, this situation will have disastrous consequences for the economy and for society. While India Inc has been complaining about the lack of skill training hurting industry, the mass of semi-educated, unemployable youth could fall prey to destructive, anti-social activities. It's imperative that Indian universities are freed from the shackles of bureaucracy and given adequate autonomy with regard to funding and pedagogy. Fostering competition is the only way to raise standards and inject vigour in our educational institutes. In this regard, passing the foreign universities Bill hanging fire in Parliament is a good idea.

**Source:** 21 June, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

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**Source:** 21 June, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

### RESOURCE

#### Bigger 'literary treasure' in store for students

Students, researchers and teachers of Lucknow will have a bigger 'knowledge bank' in time to come.

Three higher educational institutions of the city -- Gautam Buddh Technical University, Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow and Amity University-may open their libraries to each other's students.

Representatives from these institutions came on a common platform at the Higher Education Librarians' Conclave 2013, here on Wednesday and there was general consensus among them for greater utilisation of library resources by book lovers.

Organised by Pearson India, an education company, the conclave witnessed participation of more than 100 librarians from higher education institutions across UP. Dr RK Khandal, vice-

chancellor, GBTU floated the idea which was received well by all.

Khandal said, "Libraries are the backbone of the education system. Librarians should analyse why students are going online to find information. The content offered by libraries needs to be engaging and informative. Librarians should use new media such as twitter, facebook to connect with the new generation. Libraries should organise social events to facilitate learning and discussion to win students back."

Prof Devashish Das Gupta from IIM-L added, "Libraries should be able to generate interest in students through its ambience and resources. Prof SK Srivastava from Amity University said: "Librarians should enhance their skills and knowledge to serve students effectively."

Anish Srikrishna, senior vice-president, Higher Education, Pearson India said, "The Higher Education Librarians' Conclave is a platform for academic librarians to share the best practices and innovative methods."

**Source:** 20 June, 2013/ [Hindustan Times](#)

#### Much Enthusiasm for Research in The Indian Subcontinent

If the number of applications to the maiden PhD programmes at the South Asian University (SAU) is anything to go by, the young minds of the South Asian region sure want to dig deeper for knowledge. Take for instance the doctoral programme for Biotechnology, in which the university got more than 500 applications against 10 seats on offer. The university received for this academic session a total number of 4133 applications for its Master's and PhD programmes from eight South Asian countries, a good figure considering the university is only in its third academic year. This number is almost double compared to that of last year.

Established by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, admission to the university is governed by a quota system where each member country of the regional body gets a specific number of seats in each programme of study. This year, the maximum applications for both Master's as well as Doctoral programmes were received from India. For seven Master's degree programmes, 2516 Indian students vied for India's quota of 105 seats this year whereas the total number of Indian aspirants last year was 1796.

Prof. GK Chadha, the President of SAU, said, 'I will attribute the upward swing in the number of applications to the robust academic environment that SAU has created in such a short period of its

existence." With rare courses and some of the best faculties a university in this region could have, the heightened interest shown by the students and the academia is only understandable, he added.

SAU currently offers seven Master' and seven PhD programmes. Ultimately, it aspires to have 11 Post Graduate and Research faculties and a faculty of Undergraduate studies. At full strength, the university whose campus is being constructed at Maidan Garhi in New Delhi will have about 7000 students. Every year, SAU conducts SAARC wide entrance test in all the major cities in South Asia. While admission to Master's programmes is based on the entrance test, PhD aspirants have to go through presentation of thesis proposal and personal interview as well.

Talking about the programmes that are most sought after, Vice President of the university - Prof. Rajiv K. Saxena, who is also the Dean of Faculty of Life Sciences and Biotechnology said, "While we witnessed about 56 per cent increase in the total number of applications received this year for all courses, Master's programmes in Biotechnology, Development Economics and International Relations in particular are more popular amongst the students. MSc Applied Mathematics, which was introduced last year, saw a whopping 158 per cent jump in the number of applications."

**Source:** 20 June, 2013/ [India Education Diary](#)

### International degree

Looking for opportunities to study for Master's or doctoral degrees in science and technology? Students have a range of options to choose from if they target universities abroad. The option to study abroad, at this enhanced level of academics, is meaningful and justified as the various disciplines that are available for the discerning student, keen to think out-of-the-box and explore frontiers; are hitherto unexplored in Indian academia.

US is a popular choice, primarily because it offers a wider selection of fields of study, more specialisation areas, a proactive curriculum and more scholarships and other forms of financial aid. The US has larger number of universities teaching science subjects, which Indian students aspire for. For instance , a computer science or engineering graduate may wish to look at artificial intelligence or robotics as a major field of study, while a pharmacy student may seek to specialise in pharmacognosy or pharmacokinetics.

Study options in astrophysics, aerospace engineering, cosmology, virology, gerontology, epidemiology, and immunology are among popular

choices in the US. Often American universities offer integrated Master's-PhD combined degree programmes that ensure seamless entry and quick completion of the highest degree objective for the Indian student.

US universities need applicants to take the GRE and TOEFL iBT tests ([www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)) that are offered in India and the application process starts at least 12 months prior to the targeted semester start dates in August and January every year. Three-year Bachelor degrees are considered on par with four year American undergraduate degrees if they are earned from NAAC grade 'A' universities in India, and the student has secured a second division at least. Some good universities to study science include Georgia Institute of Technology, University of Michigan Ann Arbor, Drexel University, Texas A&M University, University of Maryland, Illinois Institute of Technology , Arizona State University,

University of Florida Gainesville, University of Wisconsin Madison, University of Nebraska Lincoln, among many others. The student visa (F-1) is granted after a brief interview and is an easy process provided applicants prepare their documents carefully and are clear about their goals.

Several countries in the European Union boast of good universities that teach sciences at the Master's level and beyond. For instance, polymer science, marine biology, wireless communication and naval architecture are interesting options available in universities in Denmark and Sweden. Structural engineering is researched in Dutch universities, while biological sciences in its entire and varied domain is researched and taught at an exemplary level in Germany and France. Italian universities teach transportation design and automotive engineering at a superior level of technical and aesthetic performance. The international degree programmes are taught in English but learning the local language will pave the way for a longer stay. Scholarships are not as plentiful but some scholarships, like Erasmus Mundus for non-EU citizens, are available to Indian students. Living expenses are higher than that in North America.

However, the renewable residence permit, valid for all Schengen states, is generally available to students within six months of their arrival in any EU country. Some reputed universities for study of science in EU are University of Bologna, Max Planck Institute, Sorbonne - Universite de Paris, Technical University Delft, University of Rotterdam, University of Stuttgart, University of Heidelberg , Politecnico di Darmstadt, University of Sienna, University of Uppsala and Technical University Denmark

-Copenhagen , but by no means is this list exhaustive.

Institutions in the UK like Imperial College, University of Cambridge, University of Manchester, King's College, University of Oxford, are good places to study the one-year Master's degree in the sciences and for doctoral programmes. Entry is competitive but does not require any standardised test scores other than either TOEFL or IELTS. Tuition fees are not offset by very generous bursaries but doctoral grants are common. Study of physics, astronomy, bio-chemistry and mathematics are popular for international students.

Ireland, too, has a strong focus on science and institutes provide a variety of courses from BSc in Equine Science to MSc in Cognitive Science.

Singapore, being closer home is a viable choice for higher education. The National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University offer postgraduate programmes in science stream. Selection is stringent as many Singaporeans are high achievers and prefer to study in their own country. Scholarships are few but research grants are available for those who qualify.

**Source:** 24 June, 2013/ [Times of India](#)

### **Experts for stronger ties between industry and institutes**

A need for forging a partnership between industry and technical institutes for the creation of employable youth was highlighted during a regional workshop on the AICTE-CII Survey of Industry-Linked Technical Institutes 2013. It was organised jointly by the All India Council for Technical Education and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

Dr Avinash Pant, Vice Chairman, AICTE said, "Institutes should not only aggressively collaborate with industry by way of guest lectures, plant visits, curriculum designing, CEO talks, faculty development and placement programs but also insist on long term and sustained partnership by making industry representatives a part of the institute management committee."

He also highlighted the need for the regulation of technical institutes. "Without regulation, higher education will not be very beneficial to the students. We are equally convinced that industry should participate in the institutional development. Industry should invest in research and development. The relationship between the two should be a strategic one," he said.

Highlighting the problem of low rate of employment among the technical graduates, K Verma, Director - HR &MS, Alchemist Ltd said, "The total intake of engineering colleges in the country is around four lakh per year and 50,000 in the northern region, but due to lack of industrial exposure and training, 49 per cent of students remain unemployed. There is a dire need to map the industry requirements and find out what kind of jobs is required".

Suggesting measures to ensure maximum employment, K Verma said that the project-based training should be built into the curriculum. Students should be encouraged to demonstrate acquired learning through a live, actionable project.

Gurpreet Kaur Sapra, Director, Technical Education, Chandigarh, who was also present at the occasion said that on CII recommendation to add specific vocational courses in the curriculum as per the industry demands, a new Polytechnic College will be opening very soon.

Others to speak at the occasion were Man Mohan Singh, Chairman, CII Chandigarh Council and Shalini S Sharma, Head, Higher Education.

**Source:** 29 June, 2013/ [Indian Express](#)

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If you are an academician, a researcher, an investigator or a thinker then, Apeejay Stya Education Research Foundation invites you to send your inputs by way of your opinion, information, suggestions and experiences in the field of education.

Researchers are also invited to send in their published documents so that they can be hosted on this site.

Please email your contributions to [aserf@apeejay.edu](mailto:aserf@apeejay.edu)



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